



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### PROJECT BACKGROUND AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Tasty Top Development, LLC., the Proponent and Owner, proposes to develop the properties identified as 93, 95, 97 Northampton Street (Route 10), Easthampton, Massachusetts (the “Site”) (**Figure 1.1**). Since filing the EENF, the Proponent has purchased the properties on the northwest side of Northampton Street identified as 1 Groveland Street and 94 Northampton Street to accommodate the preferred intersection design. These two additional properties, along with the original three parcels are collectively referenced as the “Project Area.” Sierra Vista Commons (the “Project”) would be a mixed-use residential and commercial center. The Site, as purchased by the Proponent on April 11, 2022, consists of approximately 33-acres of partially developed land with 332-feet of frontage along Northampton Street. The surrounding land uses abutting the Project Area include mixed commercial uses to the north and west, vacant land to the east, and residential neighborhoods to the south (**Figure 1.2**).

The Site has previously supported a variety of uses that have altered approximately 17.1 acres of the total Site area. Approximately 10-acres of the southern portion of the Site was operated as a driving range known as Easthampton Golf since at least the 1990s, based on aerial image review. Easthampton Golf included a paved parking area, a small building supporting a sales office, an artificial turf and natural grass tee box area, and a mowed lawn range. Within the immediate frontage on Northampton Street, the Site supported a retail ice cream stand and paved parking lot as well as a single-family home and barn. These structures have been removed from the Site though they are visible on the 2021 aerial image on **Figure 1.2**.

Approximately 6.5 acres within the northern portion of the Site was historically used as an agricultural field, though it has not been actively farmed in at least two years. Access to this field is currently from a pre-existing, unauthorized wooden bridge crossing the intermittent stream which bisects the property. No authorized, legal access is currently available to continue using that field for agriculture.

The two additional parcels included in the Project Area appear to have been previously disturbed. The parcel at 1 Groveland St is approximately 0.6-acres and from aerial imagery appears to contain a lawn, a vegetative screen that is oriented northwest-southeast, and sporadic other trees. The parcel at 94 Northampton Street is approximately 0.3-acres and contains a paved parking area with surrounding lawn.

In November 2022, the Proponent filed applications for the Project with the City of Easthampton (City) Planning Board and Conservation Commission. The City Planning Board issued a Plan Approval, Site Plan Review, and Special Permit Decision authorizing the Project as proposed herein on November 14, 2023 (**Attachment 3-1**). The Conservation Commission closed the Public Hearing on January 8, 2024 and issued the Order of Conditions on January 23, 2024 (**Attachment 3-2**).

The Project proposes to redevelop the Site into a mixed-use residential and commercial center. Site Plans are provided in **Attachment 2**. The Project design matches proposed uses with those allowed in the Site zoning districts as well as those encouraged by Planning Board and City planning documents. The front portion of the Site, to a distance of 800 feet from Northampton Street, is zoned as Highway Business (HB) and the rear of the Site is zoned as Residential-Suburban A (R-15). A portion of the Site is also within the Smart Growth District. The Project includes the following development:

- Roots Learning Center (Daycare facility), approximately 9,000 square feet (SF);
- Roots Gymnastic Center, approximately 7,000 SF;
- 1 Sit-down restaurant, 220-seat capacity, approximately 5,500 SF;



- 1 Bank, approximately 3,200 SF;
- 1 Stand alone small retail, approximately 4,000 SF;
- 2 Mixed-use warehouse/storage, contractor units, approximately 7,400 SF/building;
- 1 Mixed-use retail/office buildings with 14 apartments above, approximately 16,000 SF; and
- 10 Mid-rise (3 floor) apartments buildings, 188 units total, nine 13,600 SF buildings and one 18,000 SF building.

The Project proposes to develop mixed uses within the HB zone which has direct street front access from Northampton Street. Locating the commercial and some residential development within this area was recommended by the Highway Business District Review Subcommittee in its report to the Planning Board, dated July 9, 2013. This development strategy sites business and commercial uses in the City's commercial corridor and avoids developing a single, large commercial retailer or strip mall, which was identified as a goal in the City's Master Plan and further supported by the Highway Business District Review Subcommittee. Approximately 15 acres of the Site are within this HB Zone and Smart Growth District Overlay. Fifty-eight apartments are proposed within this zone.

Most of the housing units, including the eight residential apartment buildings each containing 18 units, are proposed in the R-15 zone, away from Northampton Street. The R-15 Zone is approximately 18 acres. A total of 54 apartments Site-wide would be designated as affordable housing to meet the City of Easthampton Zoning requirements. The Master Plan identified the need for increased affordable housing given increasing housing costs and low vacancy rates in Easthampton. The City of Easthampton Housing Production Plan 2021-2026 emphasize the benefits to the City in reaching 10% affordable housing and achieving safe harbor from Chapter 40B.

To support the proposed businesses and residences, the Project includes the construction of an internal roadway to provide access and circulation, parking spaces for each facility and building, and typical site utilities. This roadway will include sidewalks, crosswalks, and speed humps as necessary at critical points. To access the northern portion of the property, the current, unauthorized stream crossing will be removed, and a stream-crossing compliant bridge will be installed.

The Project will be serviced by municipal sewer and water connections to existing infrastructure. The water connection will be in Northampton Street while the sewer connection is to an interceptor line located along the northeastern (rear) property boundary. These municipal services have adequate capacity to service the proposed development. Trash collection will be provided via private service at dumpsters located throughout the development.

Most of the Site is currently open field or driving range lawn and is therefore already devoid of trees. Some tree removal is proposed along the existing edges of the fields; however, a minimum 35-foot vegetative buffer will be provided along the abutting residential properties to the south. An existing 160-180-foot vegetative buffer will be maintained throughout the construction of the Project to divide the rear residential dwellings from the mixed-use development in the front of the Site. Additional landscape and restoration plantings are proposed throughout the development to offset necessary tree removal.

#### **CHANGES SINCE THE EENF**

The Project was submitted to the Planning Board in November 2022. Between November 2022 and filing the EENF in June 2023, multiple site plan revisions and an overall reduction in the proposed layout were implemented. Following the issuance of the Secretary's Certificate on the EENF, additional design revisions include:

- Selection of the intersection design as a roundabout;



- Purchase of 1 Groveland Street and 94 Northampton Street located between Groveland Street and Mountainview Drive on the northwest side of Northampton Street to accommodate the preferred intersection design;
- Expansion of the traffic study area;
- Reduction in total parking spaces from 510 to 478;
- Revisions to the stormwater management system per coordination with the Conservation Commission's third-party reviewer;
- Revisions to building materials;
- Removal of proposed propane water heating; and
- Modified entry to and parking at the proposed bank.

## MASSACHUSETTS ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT APPLICABILITY AND PROCESS TO DATE, DEIR SCOPE

The Project, as currently designed, exceeds the following review thresholds, two of which are mandatory Environmental Impact Report (EIR) thresholds, as noted below:

### 1. Land

- a. 301 CMR 11.03(1)(a)(2) *Creation of 10 or more acres of impervious area (EIR threshold);*
- b. 301 CMR 11.03(1)(b)(2) *Creation of 5 or more acres of impervious area;*
- c. 301 CMR 11.03(1)(b)(4) *Conversion of land in active agricultural use to nonagricultural use, provided the land includes soils classified as prime, state important, or unique by the USDA;*

### 2. Transportation

- a. 301 CMR 11.03(6)(a)(6) *Generation of 3,000 or more New average daily trips (adt) on roadways providing access to a single location (EIR threshold);*
- b. 301 CMR 11.03(6)(b)(13) *Generation of 2,000 or more New adt on roadways providing access to a single location;*
- c. 301 CMR 11.03(6)(b)(14) *Generation of 1,000 or more New adt on roadways providing access to a single location and construction of 150 or more New parking spaces at a single location; and*
- d. 301 CMR 11.03(6)(b)(15) *Construction of 300 or more New parking spaces at a single location.*

The Proponent filed an Expanded Environmental Notification Form (EENF) with the EEA MEPA Office on June 30, 2023. The EENF requested that the Secretary of EEA allow for the preparation of a Single Environmental Impact Report (SEIR). The Secretary's Certificate for the EENF (EEA#16729) was issued on August 16, 2023, and is included, along with the comment letter received as **Attachment 1-1** of this DEIR. The Secretary did not allow for the preparation of an SEIR, and as such, this DEIR has been prepared in response to the required scope that includes the following elements:

- Formatting in accordance with Section 11.07 of the MEPA regulations for outline and content;
- Identification, description, and assessment of the environmental impacts of changes in the project that have occurred since the filing of the EENF (**Design Revisions included in Section 2.2 with impacts assessed in subsequent sections**);
- Updated list of required Permits, Financial Assistance, and other state, local, and federal approvals (**Section 9.0**);
- Provide a description of the Project's consistency with applicable permitting and review requirements (**Section 9.1**);



- Environmental Justice (EJ);
  - Continued EJ engagement including circulation of the DEIR or a summary thereof to the EJ Reference List and an additional community meeting (**Section 7.3, Attachment 11-2, Figure 7.2**);
  - Obtention and use of an updated EJ Reference List from the MEPA Office (**Attachment 11-3**);
  - Revised EJ impacts based on updated traffic and air quality analyses and discuss if mitigation is necessary (**Section 7.7**);
  - Discussion of diesel truck traffic during and post construction (**Section 7.7**);
- Traffic, Transit, Bicycle, & Pedestrian Access;
  - Expand study area to include the intersections of Route 10/O'Neil Street, Route 10/Pleasant Street, and Route 10/Union Street as well as other intersections where project-generated-trips increase peak hour traffic volumes by >5% or more than 100 vehicles per hour (**Section 5.1.4**);
  - Identify the preferred intersection design and discuss how this intersection will impact traffic operations (**Section 5.1.6**);
  - Identify how the Proponent will evaluate the need to construct the additional parking (**Section 5.1.8**);
  - Provide a detailed Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program with the goal of reducing vehicle trips by project employees and incorporate the recommendations of MassDOT as the minimum TDM Program (**Section 5.1.7**);
  - Consult with Pioneer Valley Transit Authority regarding future bus routes along Route 10 and potential commutation to the Project Site (**Section 5.1.3.2**);
  - Identify existing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and gaps and desire lines in access for future use as well as recommend multi-modal site access as a component of mitigation (**Section 5.1.2.6**);
  - Commit to implementing the Transportation Monitoring Program (TMP) with specific measures (**Section 5.1.8**);
  - Assess Project mitigation considering other proposed projects in the vicinity such as the Complete Streets effort (**Section 5.1.7**);
  - If the TDM is the only proposed mitigation, discuss how these measures will be made legally enforceable (**Section 5.1.8**);
  - Clearly state the percent decrease in traffic and associated air emissions associated with the mitigation commitments, including the TDM (**Sections 5.1.7, Section 5.4.4, and Section 5.5**);
- Air Quality;
  - Revise the air quality analysis to reflect revised traffic study (**Section 5.5**);
  - Expanded air quality analysis to evaluate Particulate Matter (PM) PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> (**Section 5.5**);
  - Discuss traffic impacts on air quality based on expanded study area and identify if pollution will increase by 1 ton per year or more (**Section 5.5**);
  - Discuss other proposed air quality mitigation, if proposed (**Section 5.5**);



- Land Alteration and Impervious Surfaces;
  - Revised Site Plans with clearly delineated areas of work and areas to be left undisturbed (**Attachment 2 Drawing C-2.0**);
  - Clarify work phasing and measures to minimize the disturbed area at any given time and identify initial site preparation work (**Section 2.3**);
  - Provide a cut/fill analysis for the Project grading (**Section 4.1.2**);
  - Clarify and quantify existing land uses in detail including paved/impervious, previously altered but not paved, unaltered (**Section 4.2.1**);
  - Clarify and quantify proposed land uses in detail include by separate buildings, actions, and existing vegetative cover types (**Section 4.2.2**);
  - Provide a comprehensive evaluation of land alteration reduction measures (**Section 4.2.3**);
- Wetlands and Stormwater;
  - Demonstrate how the Project meets relevant performance standards and protects the interests of the Wetland Protection Act (WPA) (**Section 4.6.2 and Attachment 3-2**);
  - Demonstrate how the proposed stream crossing will be constructed in compliance with the Massachusetts Stream Crossing Standards and will avoid impacts to the adjacent Bordering Vegetated Wetland including a description of how the water and sanitary sewer line installations will avoid regulated area alteration (**Attachment 2 Drawing B-2 and Section 4.6.2.1**);
  - Provide an updated Stormwater Report that includes details about the design and function of the proposed stormwater system including a discussion of low impact development techniques, stormwater best management practices (BMPs) utilizing source control measures, structural BMPs, and maintenance requirements (**Attachment 6, sections 5.2.1.3 and 5.2.1.5**);
  - Confirm that there is adequate separation between the bottom of infiltration/detention basins and the maximum groundwater elevations (**Section 5.2.1.5**);
  - Discuss if the Project meets the definition of a Land Uses with Higher Potential Pollutant Loads (LUHPPL) and if it will comply with the Stormwater Management Standards (SMS) (**Section 5.2.1.5**);
  - Identify changes to the stormwater management system from the peer review ongoing at the time of the EENF (**Section 5.2.1.2**);
  - Provide a plan and description of each infiltration/detention basin's catchment area and indicate which stormwater connections are associated directly with each basin (**Attachment 2 Drawing F-2 and Section 5.2.1.4**);
  - Describe pre-treatment BMPs within the stormwater treatment train (**Section 5.2.1.3**);
  - Provide a draft stormwater Operation and Maintenance Plan and total suspended solids removal rates (**Section 5.2.1.5, Attachment 6 Table 11, and Attachment 6 Section V**);
  - Identify and discuss the source control, pollution prevention measures, and specific structural stormwater BMPs to manage discharges into the MassDEP Approved Zone II **Section 4.5.2**);
  - Coordinate with MassDEP regarding the final proposed stormwater system design and the applicability of a BRP WS-06 UIC Registration and provide an update on this coordination or changes to the design or permit needs (**Section 5.2.1.5**);



- Climate Change – Adaptation and Resiliency;
  - Evaluate if the Project is maximizing environmentally sensitive site design and low impact development techniques to promote site resiliency for future climate conditions (**Section 5.2.1.3**);
  - Describe specific measures to avoid or minimize future heat impacts including the number of new trees to be planted and the potential use of high albedo products (**Section 5.3.2.3**);
  - Evaluate the efficacy of the stormwater management system over additional storm scenarios than previously modeled, including the 25- and 50-year condition as of 2070 (**Section 5.3.1.2 and Attachment 8-2**);
- Climate Change – Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG);
  - Provide a revised GHG emissions analysis consistent with the DOER comment letter recommendations (**Section 5.4**);
  - Evaluate higher roof performance for the gymnastics center, daycare, and warehouse storage buildings (**Section 5.4.1**);
  - Provide, for each building, the derated U-value of opaque wall assemblies, window-to-wall ratios and if glazed wall systems are proposed (**Sections 5.4.1.2 and 5.4.2.2**);
  - Include information on air infiltration and evaluate if better-than-code air infiltration is a possible mitigation measure (**Sections 5.4.1.2 and 5.4.2.2**);
  - Provide information on the proposed ventilation energy recovery and confirm recover is at least 70% effective (**Section 5.4.1.2**);
  - Describe the type of electric air source heat pump space system is proposed and evaluate the use of systems capable of energy recovery during concurrent heating and cooling (**Sections 5.4.1.2 and 5.4.2.2**);
  - Provide additional information on the residential building envelope quality, heat recovery, and management of solar gains (**Section 5.4.2.2**);
  - Provide a complete Passivehouse evaluation by a certified Passivehouse consultant through the MassSave Program (**Attachment 9-3**);
  - Evaluate the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of water heating with air source heat pumps for all buildings (**Sections 5.4.2.1.2 and 5.4.2.2**);
  - Quantify the total square footage of PV arrays proposed for each building and clarify the minimum solar readiness for the commercial solar buildings and multifamily buildings as required by the Code and describe if above-code rooftop solar readiness is proposed as a mitigation measure (**Sections 5.4.1.2 and 5.4.2.2**);
  - Evaluate increasing the EV charging stations from two to five at each residential building and providing at least two charging stations at commercial buildings (**Sections 5.4.1.2 and 5.4.2.2**);
  - Quantify EV readiness of each building and evaluate providing 25% readiness for all buildings with increased EV charging or readiness as additional mitigation (**Sections 5.4.1.2 and 5.4.2.2**);
- Water Supply;
  - Evaluate the adequacy of water supply capacity for each phase of the Project as well as the Project as a whole (**Section 5.2.2.2**);





- Identify if upgrades to the existing water supply infrastructure are necessary to support the Project (**Section 5.2.2.1**);
- Construction Period;
  - Clarify the Project phasing as well as initial site preparation work (**Section 2.3**);
  - Commit to complete MEPA review and other required permitting prior to commencing construction as well as submitting a Commencement of Construction Notice to be filed with MEPA pursuant to 301 CMR 11.08(10) (**Section 6.0**);
  - Describe how construction will be managed in accordance with MassDEP Air Pollution Control (310 CMR 7.01, 7.09-7.10), and Solid Waste Facilities (310 CMR 16.00, 310 CMR 19 inclusive of 310 CMR 19.017) (**Section 6.11**);
  - Discuss construction-period impacts on state-listed species (**Section 6.3**), wetlands (**Section 6.6**), stormwater (**Section 6.8**), noise (**Section 6.14**), air quality (**Section 6.14**), water quality (**Section 6.5**), and traffic (**Section 6.7**);
  - Describe all BMPs to avoid erosion or sedimentation in areas of disturbance that are associated with future phases of work (**Section 6.8.1**);
  - Describe truck routes and other measures to minimize impacts from truck travel on residential areas during construction (**Section 6.7**);
  - Confirm the Project will require contractors to use Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel fuel and discuss the use of after-engine emissions controls if equipment with Tier 4 federal emissions standard is not used (**Section 6.13**);
  - Provide detailed information on construction and demolition debris (C&D) generation, handling, recycling, and disposal including measures to reduce solid waste generation (**Section 6.11**);
  - Describe stormwater management measures during construction including dewatering activities, associated NPDES permitting, and mitigation measures (**Section 6.8 and Section 6.8.2**);
  - If dewatering activities are proposed; describe how they will be implemented (**Section 6.8.3**);
  - List construction-period mitigation measures in the draft Section 61 Findings (**Section 11.3**);
- Summarize the proposed mitigation measures in a tabular format, including construction-period measures, a comprehensive list of commitments to avoid, minimize, and mitigate environmental and related public health impacts, and separately identify EJ-specific mitigation measures, if applicable (**Section 11.3, Table 11-1**);
- Provide separate Draft Section 61 Findings for each Agency Action to be taken on the Project (**Section 11.3**);
- Provide a self-certification to the MEPA Office that proposed GHG emission reduction measures, or their equivalent, were implemented as a component of the Draft Section 61 Findings (**Section 11.3**);
- Copy of the Secretary's Certificate and each comment letter received with direct responses to comments within MEPA jurisdiction and the Scope requirements set forth in the Secretary's Certificate (**Attachment 1-1 and Section 10**); and
- Circulation to those parties who commented on the EENF and State and municipal agencies from whom the Project will seek permits or approvals (**Attachment 12**).

This DEIR has been developed specifically to address the Scope.



## **PERMITS, FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, AND LAND TRANSFERS**

The Project will require a Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Access Permit (i.e., curb cut) to provide Site access. Additionally, State funding is being pursued to support the development of this Project:

- Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (HLC):
  - Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit allocation;
  - State of MA Low Income Housing Tax Credit allocation;
  - Massachusetts Affordable Housing (deferred payment loan);
  - Massachusetts Housing Stabilization Fund (deferred payment loan); and
  - Facilities Consolidation Funds (deferred payment loan).
- Massachusetts Housing Program, Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency:
  - Workforce Housing Program (deferred payment loan).

## **PROJECT ALTERNATIVES**

The EENF included an analysis of five alternatives as follows:

- Alternative No. 1 – Reduced Build Mixed-Use Development (Preferred Alternative);
- Alternative No. 2 – Original Design Mixed-Use Development;
- Alternative No. 3 – No Build Alternative;
- Alternative No. 4 – Detached Dwelling Residential Development within R-15 District; and
- Alternative No. 5 – Commercial Development Only within HB District.

The alternatives were evaluated in the EENF and are discussed in detail in **Section 3** of this DEIR. The Secretary's Certificate did not require the evaluation of additional alternatives. The preferred alternative, reduced build mixed-use development, has been refined but has not been substantially changed since the EENF.

### **Alternative No. 1 – Reduced Build Mixed-Use Development (Preferred Alternative)**

This alternative has been approved by the City of Easthampton Planning Board (**Attachment 3-1**) and includes the development of 202 apartments (54 of which will be affordable housing units), a bank, standalone retail, restaurant, two contractor storage unit buildings, a mixed-use commercial building with apartments above, a gymnastics center, and a daycare. The Project includes supportive features including a stormwater management system, internal roadway, and parking areas. A community garden, playground, and pool are provided for use by development residents. The Site will be accessed by a roundabout on Route 10.

The Project will develop approximately 21.5 acres of the overall 33-acre Site and will leave approximately 11.5 acres unaltered. Compared to the original design (Alternative No. 2), the preferred alternative will:

- Reduce traffic generation by 24%;
- Reduce tree clearing by approximately 1.3 acres;
- Reduce impervious cover by approximately 25,000 square feet; and
- Increase undisturbed areas onsite.





This alternative proposes approximately 80% of the development footprint within previously cleared land to limit tree removal. This alternative was selected in coordination with the City following significant public input during Planning Board meetings. As this plan meets the Proponent's goals to develop a mixed-use development with both market rate and mixed-use affordable housing units and incorporates public input, it is the preferred alternative.

#### **Alternative No. 2 – Original Design Mixed-Use Development**

The original design, as submitted to the Planning Board in 2022 was approximately 10-20% larger than the Project currently proposed. This original design alternative included two mixed use commercial buildings in the central portion of the property and included an additional mid-rise residential unit in the easternmost rear corner of the property.

The overall site layout plan is included as **Attachment 2-1** for reference. This plan is no longer preferred or being pursued as the community concerns were not fully addressed by this development footprint.

#### **Alternative No. 3 – No Build Alternative**

Under the No-Build Alternative, the Site would remain in its current, vacant, state. This alternative would not provide the City of Easthampton with additional jobs, either construction-related or permanent, would not provide additional housing units, and would not advance the City towards meeting its Housing Production Plan goals. As this Site is identified as a Smart Growth District, if the preferred alternative is not pursued, it would be anticipated that another project would be proposed on this site.

#### **Alternative No. 4 – Detached Dwelling Residential Development within R-15 District**

This alternative would maintain the original mixed-use design within the HB; however, it would subdivide the rear portion of the site zoned as R-15 and would install a subdivision road. The Easthampton Table of Use Regulations, revised 05-04-2022, permits the development of a Major Residential Development within R-15 as a Use Permitted by Right. The R-15 portion of the site is approximately 18.1 acres. Under the Zoning Ordinance, detached year-round dwellings within the R-15 district require a minimum lot size of 15,000 SF. Given this, approximately 50 homes could be proposed.

This alternative would result in a similar development footprint as it would require similar utilities, stormwater management systems, and access roadways; however, it would provide less than 25% of the total housing units proposed under the preferred alternative. Larger, more sprawling developments are not encouraged by the City Planning Documents as they provide fewer housing units per unit area, resulting in fewer land conservation opportunities across the City. Therefore, this alternative is not preferred.

#### **Alternative No. 5 – Commercial Development Only withing HB District**

This alternative maintains the original mixed-use design within the R-15 district; however, it would not propose any residential dwellings within the HB district near the front of the property. This alternative would not include mixed-use development and would propose to develop the site in support of a single large retailers (i.e., "big box store") or a series of smaller retailers (i.e., "strip mall").

This alternative would likely result in a similar area of disturbance to facilitate utilities, access, and parking through the front of the Site. Restricting the HB area to commercial development only would reduce the housing units by 28 apartments, which is counter to the City's stated goal of adding housing units. Additionally, the 2013 Highway Business District Review Subcommittee recommended to the City Council that the commercial corridor avoid the development of a single, large commercial retailer or strip mall. Therefore, this alternative is not preferred.



## SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The Project has been designed to minimize environmental impacts to the extent practicable while achieving the Project purpose. Given the scope of the Project, the environmental impacts include:

- Development of approximately 21.5 acres total, inclusive of:
  - Development of 17.1 acres of previously altered land (i.e., existing impervious cover and successional old field habitat);
  - Development of 4.4 acres of previously unaltered mixed hardwood forest;
- Creation of approximately 11.8 acres of impervious cover;
- Increased water use and wastewater generation;
- Increased greenhouse gas emissions from stationary (i.e., buildings) and mobile (i.e., traffic) sources;
- Increased vehicle trips; and
- Construction phase impacts.

## MITIGATION MEASURES

The Project has been designed to avoid and minimize environmental impacts by complying with applicable regulations and incorporating best practices including:

- Avoiding alteration to approximately 11.5 acres of the site, 9.3 acres of which are forested;
- Avoiding alteration of wetland resources protected by the Wetland Protection Act and posting signage to minimize future use and access of these areas;
- Avoiding adverse impacts on state-listed rare, threatened, or endangered species;
- Designing the stormwater management system to comply with the 10 MassDEP Stormwater Management Standards, complying with the standards in the Easthampton Stormwater Ordinance, providing pretreatment and infiltration as required by the Drinking Water Regulations, and incorporating Low Impact Development Standards, including the following measures:
  - Avoiding disturbance to wetland resource areas;
  - Incorporating site design practices that group buildings, decrease overall development footprint, utilize the existing site topography and terrain by maintaining natural drainage ways and minimizing the creation of steep slopes, and avoiding created slopes greater than 3V:1H;
  - Minimizing impervious area by reducing the roadway width, designating 85 parking spaces as green space that will only be converted to parking if necessary, and removing an initially-proposed building, parking area, and driveway;
  - Minimizing disturbance to existing trees and vegetation by locating most of the development within previously-cleared areas, retaining 70% of the existing wooded areas onsite, protecting shade trees along Northampton Street, and removing an initially-proposed building, parking area, and driveway that would have required tree removal;
  - Providing rooftop stormwater treatment of most buildings via rain gardens;
  - Providing paved surface stormwater pretreatment through the use of deep sump hooded catch basins and hydrodynamic separators before discharging to infiltration/detention basins;
  - Providing groundwater recharge through two open air infiltration basins and 13 rain gardens;
  - Equipping detention/infiltration basins with outlet control structures, level spreaders, and armored emergency spillways;
  - Preparing and implementing the Stormwater Operation and Maintenance Plan;
- Designing the Site to maintain sight lines to Mount Tom from the Site entrance;



- Incorporating the minimum lighting necessary and specifying dark-sky compliant outdoor lighting to avoid light pollution or unnecessary lighting of adjacent areas;
- Specifying water conserving fixtures including low-flow faucets in wash sinks and low-flow toilets and urinals;
- Incorporating Greenhouse Gas Reduction measures including:
  - Complying with the 2023 Stretch Code (Code) for Commercial Buildings with additional energy mitigation measures including:
    - Meeting or exceeding Code requirements for building envelope performance;
    - Accounting for thermal bridging;
    - Specifying and field testing the efficacy of low air infiltration measures;
    - Specifying triple-pane energy efficient windows with less than 30% of window to wall ratio;
    - Specifying highly efficient air-source heat pumps for heating and cooling with EER values more than 10% higher than Code;
    - Specifying electric water heaters with an energy factor of 0.95;
    - Specifying energy efficient LED lighting for indoor and outdoor use;
    - Use of Energy STAR equipment and appliances;
    - Providing up to 5,000 square feet of solar Photovoltaic (PV) systems on the Daycare Center, Gymnastics Centers, and stand-alone retail as well as meeting 80% solar readiness on these roofs;
    - Providing 2 electric vehicle (EV) charging parking spaces at commercial buildings except for the contractor storage units with 25% EV readiness across commercial lots;
  - Achieving a HERS Index score of 42 not inclusive of planned solar PV installation by including the following measures:
    - Specifying continuous exterior wall, floor, and ceiling insulation;
    - Specifying triple-pane energy efficient windows with less than 30% of window to wall ratio;
    - Specifying highly efficient air-source heat pumps for heating and cooling with rooftop Energy Recovery Ventilation of 70% effectiveness;
    - Utilizing electric heat pumps for water heating;
    - Specifying energy efficient LED lighting for indoor and outdoor use;
    - Use of Energy STAR equipment and appliances;
    - Providing approximately 7,500 square feet of solar PV on residential rooftops with at least 40% solar readiness;
    - Providing 4 EV charging parking spaces per residential building with 20% EV readiness across the residential lots;
- Managing traffic increases by:
  - Incorporating the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) approved intersection design to maintain or improve existing level of service across the study area;
  - Pursue signal retiming at Northampton Street/Florence Road/Highland Avenue, Northampton Street/West Street, and Northampton Street/Oneil Street intersections to improve traffic operations;
  - Implement the Trip Reduction Plan (a.k.a. Transportation Demand Management plan) including:
    - Vanpool/carpool incentives with designated parking spaces for carpooling;
    - Encouraging pedestrian and bicycle commuting by providing a shared use path connecting the development to Northampton Street, providing bike racks outside of each building; providing secure bike storage rooms within residential buildings, and installing a Valley Bike Share station within the Project Area;
    - Providing onsite services to minimize travel offsite by residents and commercial tenants including the recreational services for residents including a pool, playground, and community garden, providing a daycare, restaurant, bank, and retail building to meet commercial and residential



- needs within the Site, and designating a transportation coordinator to provide onsite support and education on the Trip Reduction Plan to residents;
- Authorizing the transportation coordinator to work with tenants and subcontractors such as waste disposal to schedule truck delivery and traffic for off-peak hours to the extent practicable;
- Implementing a post-development transportation management program to evaluate the success of the Trip Reduction Plan measures and validate trip projections and parking demands for the Project.
- Managing construction phase impacts by:
  - Demarcating and protecting trees, forested areas, and wetlands to avoid accidental trespass or alteration of these areas by construction equipment;
  - Phasing work to minimize the total area of disturbance at any given time;
  - Installing and maintain erosion control and sedimentation barriers as proposed throughout the Site;
  - Locating settling basins outside of the mapped Zone II Wellhead Protection Area;
  - Preparing, implementing, and updating as necessary a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and implementing National Pollutant Discharge Elimination system (NPDES) Best management Practices including:
    - Construction site planning and management measures;
    - Erosion control measures including temporary and permanent cover, grading efforts, and use of riprap or other materials;
    - Sedimentation controls including stabilized construction entrances with regular maintenance and cleaning, use of sediment basins and rock dams, sediment traps, silt fences, and storm drain inlet protection; and
    - Good housekeeping/materials management efforts including waste collection and requiring spill prevention and control measures;
  - Scheduling material and equipment deliveries outside of peak traffic hours;
  - Coordinating with MassDOT and the City of Easthampton regarding the duration and timing of roadway construction given other planned roadway improvements in the area;
  - Managing construction materials onsite to the extent practicable to decrease overall construction traffic;
  - Implementing the proposed Project Waste Management Plan including waste assessment and planning, source reduction, reuse and recycling, material handling and segregation, hazardous waste management, construction debris management, and waste disposal measures;
  - Implementing surface wetting or other cover as needed to control fugitive dust;
  - Minimizing greenhouse gas and air pollutant emissions by enforcing the anti-idling requirements, requiring the use of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel, and preferring the use of Tier 4 federal emissions standards or retrofitted equipment, if available;
  - Managing noise generation by limiting work to normal working hours, requiring appropriate equipment mufflers, scheduling work to keep average noise levels low, timing noisiest operations to the noisiest time of day, maintaining relatively uniform noise levels as practicable, and locating noisiest equipment away from property boundaries adjacent to residential properties to the extent practicable.